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ABSTRACT

A revision of the 1978 guide designed to assist institutions improve access for handicapped students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is presented. The guide assumes the reader is interested in learning how to comply with Section 504 and does not address the question of whether a particular education program or activity must be conducted in compliance with the statute or regulations. Four sections are as follows: (1) to whom the law applies (avoiding discrimination and removing subtle barriers confronted by the handicapped in the process of admission); (2) how the law applies to admissions activities (recruitment, publications, application forms and related items, admission test, financial aid, orientation, and registration); (3) some final thoughts (the importance of developing an attitude toward handicapped persons that acknowledges their civil rights, beginning with relating to handicapped students on a person-to-person basis); and (4) a 20-item checklist for colleges and universities (e.g., include a nondiscrimination statement in all application forms, hold recruitment activities in accessible facilities, and review all housing, health, and other forms for questions that solicit information that could reveal a handicap). Three appendices are: Task Force on a model admissions policy; list of state administrators of vocational rehabilitation; and information on the HEATH Resource Center. (SM)

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RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS and HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

A Guide for Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, AND HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

A Guide for Compliance
with Section 504
of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

First Edition was prepared by a Task Force listed in the appendix with editorial assistance by Martha Ross Redden, Cricket Levering, C. Diane DiQuinzio.

Second Edition was updated by Martha Ross Redden with assistance from Cricket Levering and Claire Guthrie

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F O R E W O R D

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) brought into focus the social as well as legal obligations of the postsecondary education community toward handicapped individuals.

This document, was first published in 1978 as one of a series of guides issued as part of the American Council on Education-coordinated HEATH program. It was developed by representatives of the postsecondary coummunity in cooperation with the Office for Civil Rights and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Its prescriptions are offered for adaptation to the particular circumstances of each college and university. This revised copy includes updates of legisative requirements, and represents the current state of the art based the experience of admission officers in postsecondary institutions.

No set of guidelines can anticipate all circumstances. This one makes no pretension to do so. I am convinced, however, that if the guidance offered in this publication is applied with good will and good sense, it will be fruitful. I am grateful to those members of our academic community who gave their time and talents to the preparation of this document.

Robert H. Atwell
President
American Council on Education

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PREFACE

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers has maintained a long commitment to developing access for groups of persons under-represented in institutions of postsecondary education. As part of this continuing involvement, AACRAO developed a task force to prepare the initial guidelines that would assist institutions in achieving and improving access for handicapped students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In this way, the Association approached the new mandate in the same spirit as with previous efforts to forge exemplary programs for ethnic minorities and women.

AACRAO is delighted to participate in the revision of the 1978 Guide. The cooperation with HEATH (Higher Education and the Handicapped), a project of the American Council on Education, and several other associations assures the higher education institutions of up-to-date guidelines that will continue to assist in the participation of handicapped students in higher education. We recommend these guidelines to the admissions and records persons that serve in the institutions of higher education.

J. Douglas Conner
Executive Director

Bruce T. Shutt
President

ANNUAL MEETINGS
Seventy-second Annual Meeting, April 20-25, 1986 Baltimore
1987 Las Vegas — 1988 Nashville — 1989 Chicago

INTRODUCTION

To comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which bars discrimination against qualified handicapped persons in federally funded programs, institutions of postsecondary education must scruitinize and in many cases revise their policies toward handicapped people. This Guide is an effort to interpret the letter and the spirit of Section 504 as it applies to admissions policies at postsecondary institutions. Eight activities that are part of the admissions process are reviewed in light of Section 504 and the applicable rules: recruitment; publications; application forms, interviews, and recommendations; testing; financial aid; orientation; registration; and grievance procedures. The discussion of these activities includes: citations from the Education Department regulations 34C.F.R. Part 104, that apply to each activity; an interpretation of the citations; some imperatives for institutional policy; and examples of how an institution can carry out both the letter and the spirit of the law.

This Guide assumes that the reader is interested in learning how to comply with Section 504 and does not address the question whether a particular education program or activity must be conducted in compliance with the statute or regulations. The scope of coverage of Section 504 is unclear following the Supreme Court's decision in Grove City College v. Bell. Under current law, at the time of this writing (September 1985) institutions that enroll students who receive federal student aid clearly are "recipients" of federal assistance covered by Section 504. Whether this means their admissions pracitices as well as their financial aid programs must comply with the law is not settled. The federal government suggested it its brief in Grove City that nondiscriminatory admissions

policies are essential to assure that federally assisted financial aid programs can be conducted on a nondiscriminatory basis. Admissions officers who need to know whether they are required to conduct their activities in compliance with Section 504 should consult their institution's legal counsel.

To conduct admissions and recruiting activities with an appropriate level of sensitivity, fairness, and common sense, institutions are urged to form an advisory committee on admissions and recruitment. Such a committee, which should include one or more handicapped individuals representing students, faculty or staff, or handicapped consumer groups, can be invaluable in anticipating problems and thinking through ways to achieve equal access for the handicapped. Throughout this guide there will be references to such an advisory committee. Note that the Section 504 regulations required that handicapped persons (or organizations representing handicapped persons) be involved in the self-evaluation required of each recipient institution. [34C.F.R. 104 6(c)(1)(i)] It may be that part or all of the group convened for that purpose could continue as advisors to the admissions process. In any case, the contribution of such a committee cannot be underestimated.

TO WHOM DOES THE LAW APPLY?

Colleges and universities are required by the 504 regulation to make sure that qualified handicapped persons are not denied admission or subjected to discrimination in admission to or recruitment for any federally assisted programs. [34C.F.R. 104.42(a)]

Fair admissions with respect to handicapped students means judging them by their abilities rather than their disabilities. More is required than simply ignoring a prospective student's handicap if the letter and spirit of the 504 regulations are to be realized. Assistance must be available to handicapped students so that all programs offered by an institution are as accessible to them as to students who are not handicapped. As indicated in the sections that follow, many steps can be taken to make sure handicapped students are served fairly by the admissions process. Achieving equity depends not only on avoiding discrimination but also on removing subtle barriers confronted by the handicapped in the process of admission.

A clear understanding of who is protected by Section 504 is critical to the discussion that follows:

- A handicapped person is someone who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (functions such as performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, or learning); (2) has a record of physical or mental impairment; or (3) is regarded as having a substantially limiting physical or mental impairment, even though the impairment is

insubstantial or a reflection of the attitudes of others or nonexistent. [104.3(j)]

In accordance with a formal opinion from the Attorney Genral of the United States, alcoholics and drug addicts are considered handicapped persons. Institutions are not required to alter standards but only to apply them equally to all applicants.

- o A qualified handicapped person is someone who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission to the recipient's educational program or activity. The term technical standards refers to all nonacademic criteria used for admission to and participation in a program or activity. In most instances, technical standards are a moot question. A blind person is not likely to study the visual arts, and a deaf person is not likely to study music. In all cases, the interest and determination of the individual and the feasibility of providing necessary supporting services need to be weighed carefully. A point that cannot be emphasized too strongly is that the statute and the regulation apply only to discrimination against qualified handicapped persons. Section 504 does not impose any obligation on colleges to admit and rehabilitate unqualified handicapped persons. Moreover, no institution need make major changes in an academic program in order to accommodate a handicapped student. Nonetheless, since academic and technical qualifications are not always well defined, admissions officers are advised to use common sense and good judgment in developing nondiscriminatory policies and to respond to the spirit of the law. Before students are denied admission to a program on grounds that they are not technically qualified, those requirements

should be carefully studied and documented to determine if they are in fact necessary to pass the courses in that program or to perform the job for which that program prepares the student. [104.3(k)]

Traditional concepts of what a handicapped person can and cannot do are frequently based on misinformation and stereotypes. In addition, it is important to recognize that each handicapped person is different in the severity of the disability and the coping skills developed. Even the traditional sources of information about the job abilities of handicapped persons are often wrong. Misconceptions about the abilities of the handicapped are pervasive, and no one group or agency can be uncritically relied on as an authority--not even provider groups, consumer groups, or vocational rehabilitation agencies. Even being well acquainted with a particular disability such as deafness does not mean that one knows all that is necessary about the needs of each individual.

HOW DOES THE LAW APPLY TO ADMISSIONS ACTIVITIES?

RECRUITMENT

Regulation

"Qualified handicapped persons may not, on the basis of handicap, be denied admission or be subjected to discrimination in admission or recruitment by a recipient to which this subpart applies." 104.42(a)]

"[A recipient] may not apply limitations upon the number or proportion of handicapped persons who may be admitted." 104.42(b)]

Clarification

Recruitment in this context means all activities by university staff, faculty, students, alumni, and others that are intended to influence students to attend a given institution. This includes personal contact, media presentations, and printed materials posted or sent to prospective students. Not applying limitations on the number of proportion of handicapped persons admitted means just that: Institutions may not impose such limits.

Imperative

1. Colleges and universities are prohibited from making preadmission inquiry as to whether a prospective student is a handicapped person. [104.42(b)4] (See section on Application Forms.)

2. An institution's recruitment activities must be accessible to handicapped persons.

3. It is the institution's responsibility to provide services, such as interpreters, for the handicapped at all recruitment activities or to make certain that those who conduct recruitment activities for the institution have made arrangements to provide such services to handicapped students who request them.

4. Institutions may not set limits on how many handicapped persons they will admit.

Suggested Activities

- In planning special service needs for large recruitment activities, an institution should rely on its advisory committee for suggestions regarding such items as the number and availability of interpreters for the deaf, the accessibility of locations being considered for such recruitment "fair," and the availability of volunteers to assist handicapped persons who attend the fair. When an institution participates in a fair sponsored by another institution or community group, it should make sure that the sponsoring party has made arrangements to assure handicapped persons access to the activities.

- Although the regulation does not require special recruitment efforts for handicapped students, such students should have the same opportunity to learn about an institution and to enroll in it as persons who are not handicapped. In order to provide equal opportunities, an institution may wish to expand its recruitment activities to include schools and special classes attended by handicapped students. Recruitment information should

be available in forms that are suitable for persons with impaired sensory functions. For example, material can be made available to blind students in braille, on audiotape, or by providing reader service. Advice on providing such services should be sought from handicapped persons and consumer groups for the handicapped.

- Training sessions can be provided to make recruitment personnel more aware of any services needed by handicapped persons. The admissions advisory committee can be especially helpful here.

- A brochure outlining institutional policies and describing services available to the handicapped can be prepared and made available to alumni, among others, who serve as recruiters and interviewers for the institution. Here again, the advisory committee will be helpful.

PUBLICATIONS

Regulation

"If a recipient publishes or uses recrutiment materials or publications containing general information that it makes available to participants...it shall include in those materials or publications a statement of [compliance with Section 504]...A recipient may meet the requirement of this paragraph either by including appropriate inserts in existing materials and publications or by revising and reprinting the materials and publications." [104.8(b)]

Clarification

Publications covered by the regulation include catalogs and bulletins, promotional literature, department brochures, application and admission forms, student handbooks, information on programs and services for handicapped students, orientation materials, and any other university-sponsored information, published or broadcast, that relates directly or indirectly to recruitment or admission.

If an institution currently has a policy statement that prohibits discrimination on other grounds, it can add "handicap" to the categories protected by that statement. In all publications, the compliance statement should be prominently displayed.

For publications already in print, compliance statements can be added by using a printed insert or a rubber stamp. Requests for information which are no longer allowed (see the section on Application Forms, which follows) can be blacked out.

It should be noted, however, that U.S. Postal Service regulations state that any enclosures with or attachments to second class mail will required additional postage. It may be possible to alter publications by using a rubber stamp, without necessitating additional postage. Institutions should check with local postal authorities to determine whether the proposed additions or alterations are in conformity with postal regulations.

Imperative

1. All college and university publications relating directly or indirectly to recruitment or admissions must demonstrate compliance with the 504 regulation. Any publications that are not in compliance must be revised.

2. All college and university publications relating directly or indirectly to recruitment or admissions must contain a compliance statement.

Suggested Activities

o Here is an acceptable compliance statement for existing publications:

"____ College does not discriminate against qualified handicapped individuals in admission or access to its programs."

o For new publications, the following statement can serve as a model:

"The University of ____ does not discriminate against qualified handicapped individuals in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its federally funded programs and activities, as specified by applicable federal laws and regulations. The designated coordinator

for university compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is ____."

- In catalogs, student handbooks, brochures, and other general information publication, include handicapped students with nonhandicapped students in photographs that show a variety of campus activities.

- Instead of including all the information about services for handicapped students in one section of the student handbook, provide each item of information in its logical context--housing, health services, transportation, financial aid. The goal is to integrate, not segregate. To help students locate the information, include a statement on services for the handicapped in the introductory material, listing the sections and page numbers where the information can be found. Cite the information in the index as well (as suggested above).

- If the student handbook contains information about things to do and places to go in the local community--restaurants, bars, libraries, stores, recreation--indicate which are accessible to handicapped persons.

- An additional publication may be considered describing services for handicapped students available on campus, in the community, or through state or national programs. This publication could be prepared with the assistance of the advisory committee, local groups of handicapped persons, representatives of the state department of vocational rehabilitation, and national organizations of and for handicapped persons. (See Appendix A.)

- The advisory committee can be helpful in reviewing all publications and assisting in the development of materials addressing the needs of handicapped students.

APPLICATION FORMS AND RELATED ITEMS

Regulation

"In administering its admission policies, a recipient to which this subpart applies:

(1) May not apply limitations upon the number or proportion of handicapped persons who may be admitted....

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, may not make preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant for admission is a handicapped person, but, after admission, may make inquiries on a confidential basis as to handicaps that may require accommodation." [104.42(b)]

. . .

"Preadmission inquiry exception. When a recipient is taking remedial action to correct the efforts of past discrimination...or when a recipient is taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in its federally assisted program or activity...the recipient may invite applicants for admission to indicate whether and to what extent they are handicapped, provided that:

(1) The recipient states clearly on any written questionnaire used for this purpose, or makes clear orally if no written questionnaire is used, that information requested is intended for use solely in connection with its remedial action obligations or its voluntary action efforts; and

(2) The recipient states clearly that the information is being requested on a voluntary basis, that it will be kept confidential, that refusal to provide it will not subject the applicant to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with this part." [104.42(c)]

Clarification

With one exception, this part of the regulation prohibits any form of preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant is handicapped. The exception is when an institution "is taking remedial action to correct the effects of past discrimination..or when it is taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in its federally assisted program or activity." Even in these cases responses to preadmission inquiries must be voluntary.

A distinction needs to be made between "remedial" and "voluntary" action. If the Office for Civil Rights finds that an institution has discriminated against qualified handicapped persons, the institution will be required to take remedial action to overcome the effects of the discrimination. Voluntary action is taking positive steps to overcome the effects of any conditions that have resulted in limited participation by handicapped persons in the institution's programs or activities. Voluntary action does not involve any finding or implication that the institution has discriminated against qualified handicapped persons.

Note also that after admission, inquiries can be made about handicaps that may require accommodations as long as the information is supplied on a confidential basis. Such confidential information must be separated from the admissions process and maintained by the appropriate institutional office that

provides the service needed by the student--for example, the health unit, the housing referral service, or the financial aid office.

Imperative

Except as noted above, colleges and universities are prohibited from making any kind of preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant is handicapped. This prohibition applies to every form an applicant is asked to submit to the institution in order to be considered for admission--medical reports, housing forms, financial aid applications, and any other preadmission information.

Suggested Activities

- o An institution should eliminate from its preadmission forms all questions that solicit information regarding an applicant's handicapped status.

- o A notice of compliance could be affixed to existing application forms rather than having all such forms reprinted. However, adding a compliance statement does not remove the responsibility to eliminate all questions prohibited by the 504 regulation. (Refer to the "Publications" section concerning the U.S. postal regulations requirements for additions to second class mail.)

- o If an interview is required to all prospective students, and not just handicapped applicants, the interviewer may inform the applicant of any available services on campus that may benefit or be of interest to the applicant. However, it is the responsibility of the interviewer or

admissions officer not to use the information about the applicant's handicap to influence decisions about admission.

o Medical information can be solicited after an applicant has been admitted, if the medical information obtained is not used for the purpose of excluding or disqualifying anyone who is qualified to participate in any of the institution's programs or activities. A student's handicap should not be equated with a health condition that could serve as a legitimate basis for excluding any student from a program or activity, e.g. a contagious disease.

o In institutions, where admission and registration occur simultaneously and the application form is not used to make admission or rejection decisions, a statement such as the following may be circulated to all registrants:

"Federal law prohibits us from making preadmissions inquiry about handicaps. Any information received regarding handicaps will not adversely effect any admissions decision. If you require special services because of handicap, you should notify (name of person or office). This voluntary self-identification allows (name of college) to prepare appropriate support services to facilitate your learning. This information will be kept in strict confidence and has no effect on your admission to the college."

o Note that where prior notice is essential to the provision of services, and the student fails to provide the necessary information, no institution is obligated to provide the service at the time of entrance

to the institution. However, this does not alleviate the responsibility of the institution to provide such services at a future time.

ADMISSION TEST

Regulation

"In adminstering its admission policies, a recipient to which this subpart applies....

(2) May not make use of any test or criterion fro admission that has a disproportionate adverse effect on handicapped persons or any class of handicapped persons unless (i) the test or criterion, as used by the recipient, has been validated as a predictor of success in the education program or activity in question and (ii) alternate tests or criteria that have a less disproportionate adverse effect are not shown by the Assistant Secretary to be available;

(3) Shall assure itself that (i) admissions tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, when a test is administered to an applicant who has a handicap that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the applicant's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the applicant's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure); (ii) admissions tests that are designed for persons with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills are offered as often and in as timely a manner as are other

admissions tests; and (iii) admissions tests are administered in facilities that, on the whole, are accessible to handicapped persons...." [104.42(b)]

. . .

"Validity studies. For the purpose of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a recipient may base prediction equations on first year grades, but shall conduct periodic validity studies against the criterion of overall success in the education program or activity in question in order to monitor the general validity of the test scores." [104.42(b)]

Discussion

Some of the questions and issues raised by testing still have not been resolved in a manner that allows development of useful guidelines. Several issues are now being discussed by the Office for Civil Rights, the Educational Testing Service, and the American College Testing Program, including the predictive validity of tests for the handicapped and the appropriateness of testing in the admissions process.

Since the imperatives are stated by the regulation, this discussion is limited to suggestions for compliance with the regulation as it has been interpreted up to this point.

- Pending a resolution of the issues discussed above, the Office of Civil Rights will not find an institution out of compliance if that institution requires the submission of test scores by applicants, even though there is a possibility that these tests do not reflect a handicapped applicant's ability. However, to assure that it is in compliance, the institution must

guarantee that admissions decisions take into account other factors such as high school grades, recommendations, etc. This policy is, in fact, recommended by the major testing services.

- Until such time as a more viable policy can be worked out, the testing services will be allowed to continue to notify their users that tests were taken under non-standard conditions. This is an interim policy only. OCR recognizes that this procedure may violate the prohibition against preadmission inquiry; it will be allowed only until the interim policy can be modified, and OCR suggests that recipients be prepared to modify their admissions requirements in the future. OCR has initiated discussions with the major testing services in order to resolve the apparent problems with the testing of certain handicapped persons. Until OCR clarifies the reporting issue, AACRAO recommends that the interim policy be followed.

- Wherever information is given regarding tests required for admission, an institution must include a statement that special testing arrangements can be made for handicapped applicants and that there are alternate admissions criteria for handicapped applicants who are unable to take the required tests. Both the Educational Testing Service and the American College Testing Program have brochures describing special testing arrangements. Admissions personnel should review and evaluate the suggestions made in these brochures, in preparation for developing other testing arrangements in the future.

FINANCIAL AID

Regulation

"In providing financial assistance to qualified handicapped persons, a recipient to which this subpart applies may not (i), on the basis of handicap, provide less assistance than is provided to nonhandicapped persons, limit eligibility for assistance, or otherwise discriminate or (ii) assist any entity or person that provides assistance to any of the recipients' students in a manner that discriminates against qualified handicapped persons on the basis of handicap.

"A recipient may administer or assist in the administration of scholarhips, fellowships, or other forms of financial assistance established under wills, trusts, bequests, or similar legal instruments that require awards to be made on the basis of factors that discriminate or have the effect of discriminating on the basis of handicap only if the overall effect of the award of scholarships, fellowship, and other forms of financial assistance is not discriminatory on the basis of handicap." [104.46(a)]

Clarification

This regulation requires that equal opportunities for financial assistance be made available to qualified handicapped student. It is not discriminatory to deny an athletic scholarship to a handicapped person if the handicap renders the person unable to perform the skills necessary to qualify for the award. This rational applied equally to scholarships awarded on the basis of academic achievement. Qualified students should be selected for awards on the basis of the criteria for the award without regard to physical or mental handicap.

Institutions may continue to administer discriminatory bequests, trusts, scholarship, and related awards that have been established under wills and similar legal instruments only if the overall effect of the institution's financial assistance program is not discriminatory on the basis of handicap. (This is similar to the Title IX requirement with respect to awards restricted by sex.)

Imperative

1. An institution must take all necessary steps to see that qualified handicapped students have the same opportunities as nonhandicapped students to learn about and receive financial assistance through award programs administered by the institution.

2. All institutional publications that relate to financial aid, including financial aid publications themselves, must contain a statement of compliance with Section 504.

3. Institutions must make sure that all services of the financial aid office are accessible to and usable by handicapped students.

Suggested Activities

o Handicapped students should be made aware of all available financial assistance programs. It should not be assumed that all handicapped students will receive funding from the state department of vocational rehabilitation (DVR). These funds are not available to all handicapped students. For example, in most states DVR funds are not available for graduate study or for educational programs that are not directly related to

vocational objectives approved by DVR. Hence handicapped students, as well as those who are not handicapped, need to be informed of all possible sources of financial aid.

- Brochures, pamphlets, and other materials regarding vocational rehabilitation programs in the states of resident and nonresident students should be made available to all students, with distinctions made between those vocational rehabilitation benefits related to income and those not related to income. Handicapped students should also be provided information about social security benefits, public assistance, veterans benefits, and community assistance programs.

- To be certain students get the full benefit of state vocational rehabilitation funds, the institution's financial aid office should maintain a good working relationship with the directors of state offices. (See Appendix B.) An institution should not wait until handicapped students are actually in attendance before getting in touch with state offices. An effective working relationship can insure that most adaptive aids needed by handicapped students who are DVR clients can be supplied.

ORIENTATION

Regulation

"No qualified handicapped student shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any...extracurricular, or other postsecondary education program or activity to which this subpart applies....A recipient to which this subpart applies shall operate its programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate." [104.43]

Clarification

The orientation process includes campus visits, orientation materials such as the student handbook and other publications distributed to new students, and any programs to acquaint students with the institution.

Imperative

1. Student orientation programs must be physically accessible to all, and services such as interpreters for the deaf must be available if needed.

2. Letters inviting students to orientation activities should indicate that such services will be available.

Suggested Activities

o Orientation staff should design their programs in a way that

encourages handicapped students to attend general student orientation programs.

- The institution may arrange a special orientation for handicapped students, but such an orientation should be in addition to, not in place of, general orientation. An orientation session specifically designed for handicapped students could take up matters of particular concern to these students--mobility, acces to facilities, and where and how to get any special services needed. Participation in special orientations must be optional, not required.

- For suggestions about printed materials used in orientation, see the section on Publications.

REGISTRATION

Regulation

"No qualified handicapped student shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any academic, ...counseling, financial aid, other extracurricular, or other postsecondary education program or activity to which this subpart applies." [104.43(a)]

Clarification

Registration is popularly characterized as an ordeal for all students. For the handicapped, the difficulties that frequently accompany registration can be compounded by mobility problems or sensory impairments. Thus the registration process is a critical juncture where steps must be taken to make sure handicapped students are not excluded from programs for which they are qualified.

Imperative

Provisions must be made so that handicapped students can register for classes as conveniently and efficiently as students who are not handicapped.

Suggested Activities

- To eliminate obstacles to the handicapped, an institution's registration process should be reviewed by an advisory committee that includes handicapped students and the institution's compliance officer.

- Institutions should have available at the registration site the services

typically needed for the handicapped--for example, interpreters for the deaf. This is particularly necessary in the case of institutions with open admissions. Because these institutions conduct admissions and registration simultaneously, they cannot predict the needs of handicapped persons who come to register. The advisory committee mentioned above can assist in determining which services to have immediately available.

- To meet problems that arise despite the best efforts to eliminate them, a "back-up person" should be on hand at all times. This person should have the expertise and authority to resolve unanticipated problems. The individual might be an admissions officer, a student services representative, or an experienced student.

- Persons responsible for registration must be aware of which classrooms and buildings are physically accessible so that a student who uses a wheelchair can in fact get to all classes for which he or she registers.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

This publication urges colleges and universities to develop an attitude toward handicapped persons that acknowledges their civil rights. As stated at the outset, the 504 regulation represents a belated attempt to accord handicapped individuals the rights and privileges that are taken for granted by others. To bring to an end the discrimination experienced by the handicapped, institutions must remove both physical and psychological barriers to participation in their programs by handicapped persons.

The process begins with relating to handicapped students on a person-to-person rather than on a person-to-handicapped-person basis. This attitude should be reflected by faculty, staff, and students. Faculty seminars and workshops should be developed to lessen the discomfort and uneasiness felt by faculty members who are facing handicapped students for the first time. These seminars should not only stress attitudinal change; they should also point out that Section 504 requires that the civil rights of handicapped persons be respected. Compliance is not only a moral responsibility; it is a matter of obeying the law. Such seminars obviously should include handicapped faculty, staff, and students. Similar programs should be held for administrative personnel.

Compliance with 504 must be more than the establishment of an Office of Special Services for handicapped students. In fact, establishing such an office may not be the most effective way to accommodate handicapped students or comply with Section 504. A more effective approach is for admissions officers to adopt a leadership role and take responsibility for handicapped students in the same manner as they do for all other students, until classess actually begin. Above

all, principles of common sense should guide the institution in developing its policies to comply with 504. In this way, both the letter and the spirit of Section 504 will be served.

A CHECKLIST FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This checklist includes many of the "imperatives" and "suggested activities" outlined in this guide. It is intended to assist recruitment and admissions personnel in reviewing institutional policies and practices regarding handicapped applicants.

___ If any limits were placed on the number of qualified handicapped students who could be admitted, has that limit been removed?

___ Have all recruitment procedures been reviewed for possible discriminatory activities?

___ Do recruitment activities reach the handicapped as effectively as they reach those who are not handicapped?

___ Are all recruitment activities held in accessible facilities?

___ Have all staff, students, and alumni who participate in recruitment activities been informed of nondiscrimination requirements?

___ Is a nondiscrimination statement included in all publications related to recruitment, admissions, and financial aid (forms, advertisements, catalogs, handbooks, brochures)?

___ Are all available services for handicapped students listed in the appropriate places in campus publications-housing in the housing section, financial aid in the financial aid section, etc.

___ Have all publications and media releases been checked for material that discriminates against handicapped students and has such material been removed?

___ Do all application forms include a nondiscrimination statement?

___ Have all inquiries regarding handicap status been removed from preadmission application and other forms submitted during the admissions process?

___ Have all housing, health, and other forms been reviewed for questions that solicit information that could reveal a handicap?

___ In postadmission inquiries, is it made clear that providing information concerning a handicap is voluntary and will be kept confidential?

___ Have all admission procedures been removed which were unique to handicapped applicants and not required of other applicants? (This does not include provision of services, such as interpreters for deaf students, which would allow them to participate in activities readily available to other students.)

___ If interviews are required, is the interview format free of questions that would require students to reveal information about a handicap?

___ If tests are required for admission, has information been made available to all applicants concerning special testing arrangements for handicapped persons?

___ Is information provided to handicapped students regarding financial assistance opportunities?

___ Are all orientation services provided in an integrated setting and with the necessary services required by handicapped students?

___ Are all registration areas accessible by wheelchair? If not, have provisions been made to conduct registration for students in wheelchairs in an accessible location?

___ Are services available to handicapped students to assure equal access to registration--for example, interpreters, readers, accessible facilities, assistants?

___ Has an advisory committee been appointed, with handicapped students and/or staff as part of its membership, and has it been asked for advice and counsel on the many requirements and suggestions outlined in this Guide?

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX C

HEATH RESOURCE CENTER
NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
FOR HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

The HEATH Resource Center operates the National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Handicapped Individuals. HEATH is an acronym for Higher Education And The Handicapped. Support from the United States Department of Education enables the Center to serve as an information exchange about educational support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, and opportunities on American campuses, vocational-technical schools, adult education programs, independent living centers, and other training entities after high school. The Center gathers and dissmeniates this information so that handicapped people can develop their full potential through postsecondary education and training if they choose.

HEATH 1985-1986 Resource Directory compiled by Maxine T. Krulwich and edited by Rhona C. Hartman contains an annotated listing of about 100 national organizations which can provide information or materials of interest to those concerned with postsecondary education for handicapped individuals. In addition, the **Directory** includes a brief discussion of relevant legislation, the contact data for the 10 U.S. Department of Education Regional Technical Assistance Offices for Civil Rights, and a toll-free telephone directory for organizations of interest to those who work with postsecondary education and training of disabled persons. The **Directory** is suitable for distribution at meetings and workshops and may be ordered in quanties. Bulk orders are free by request, but your letter requesting bulk order must state to whom the copies will be given.